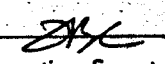


EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Routing Slip

TO:		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
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4	D/ICS	✓			
5	DDI	✓			
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11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/EEO				
14	D/Pers				
15	D/OEA				
16	C/PAD/OEA				
17	SA/IA				
18	AO/DCI				
19	C/IPD/OIS				
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		SUSPENSE _____ Date			

Remarks:


 Executive Secretary

 9/3/82
 Date

3637 (10-81)

State Dept. review completed.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

Executive Registry

82-3552/2

September 2, 1982

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MEMORANDUM FOR: OVP - Mr. Donald P. Gregg S/S 8226355
 NSC - Mr. Michael O. Wheeler S/S 8226356
 CIA ✓ [redacted]
 Defense - COL John Stanford S/S 8226358
 JCS - MAJ Dennis Stanley S/S 8226359
 Treasury - Mr. David Pickford S/S 8226360

25X1

SUBJECT : Second Revision of CPPG Issue Paper on Soviet
 Leadership Transition

Attached for your concurrence is a second revised edition of the issue paper on the Soviet leadership transition, reflecting agency suggestions and discussion at the August 26 CPPG meeting. Further comments or suggestions may be forwarded before September 13 to Tom Simons in the Office of Soviet Union Affairs, Room 4217, telephone 632-3738. If no revisions are received, we will consider the paper to be approved on a contingency basis by principals.

L. Paul Bremer, III
 Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Issue paper

State Dept. review completed.

SECRET/SENSITIVE
 DECL:OADR

B247

SECRET/SENSITIVECPPG ISSUE PAPERSoviet Leadership TransitionSITUATION:

No conceivable Soviet succession scenario is likely to precipitate a serious immediate crisis either within the USSR or in US-Soviet relations. It is conceivable that Brezhnev will step down, be kicked upstairs, or be replaced in a pre-planned move by the collective leadership. Under these circumstances, the potential for sharp near-term conflict among Brezhnev's successors would be minimal. The potential for a sharp struggle among the leadership would be somewhat higher in the event of Brezhnev's sudden death. However, in either case the overwhelming preoccupation of the Soviet leadership will be to project an image of calm and policy continuity. Even if a serious crisis is unlikely to result from Brezhnev's leaving office, we should be prepared to respond quickly and effectively to his passing from the scene, under whatever circumstances this occurs.

INTERESTS:

U.S. Interests: To underscore the continuity of our policy and U.S. leadership in world affairs and avoid actions which needlessly raise tensions or convey the counter-productive impression that we are seeking to take advantage of the Soviets at a time of uncertainty and potential instability; to convey to a successor leadership the message that if there are significant positive changes in Soviet policies there will be a significant positive response from us; and to test the willingness of a successor leadership to improve relations with the U.S. on the basis of our agenda. Pressures will build for unilateral U.S. gestures to improve the relationship; these should be firmly resisted.

Soviet Interests: To smooth the transition of power to Brezhnev's successors, ensure internal security, and avoid creating an atmosphere of crisis which could be exploited by external adversaries. The immediate period will be a time of internal adjustment as the new leaders maneuver for power, with consensus lacking for major new initiatives until their own positions are secure. Although the propaganda machine can be expected to project a "peace-loving" image, significant near-term changes in Soviet foreign and domestic policies will thus be unlikely.

Key third party interests:

(1) U.S. Allies: We expect that our allies will wish to influence our policies toward the new leadership, and they

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DECLASSIFY: OADR